

HILLTOP Lodge
ON BEAUTIFUL SYLVAN LAKE

Phone: Hopewell Junction 2761
R.R. Station: PAWLING, N. Y.

Only 65 miles from N. Y. C.
MANY NEW IMPROVEMENTS and
ADDITIONS THIS SEASON

Complete and Varied Social and Athletic Facilities
TENNIS, Night Tennis, HANDBALL
SWIMMING, BOATING, HORSE-
BACK, BASEBALL, CYCLING, Etc.

Our Food Is Tops

**For the Utmost in Vacation
Value CHOOSE HILLTOP**

Under direction of
Paul Wolfson - Sol Rothausser
N. Y. Office: 105 Nassau St.
Tel.: Cortland 7-3958

HOPEWELL JUNCTION, N. Y.

White Gates
Wappinger Falls, New York

OPEN DINING AND DANCING PAVILIONS
TENNIS & OTHER SPORTS; RECORDINGS
OUR CUISINE—OUR SPECIAL PRIDE

Regular Weekly Rates: \$45 up
Telephone: WHitehall 3-9331
or Wappinger Falls 469

PLUM POINT
Vacation fun a year round
on the majestic Hudson

• Personal service
• Delicious food
• New informality

15 MILES FROM NYC • NEW WINDSOR, N.Y. • NEW PALTZ, N.Y.

Deuel Hollow House
WINGDALE, N. Y. Phone 3691

In Berkshire foothills, 75 miles from N. Y. City on N. Y. Central R.R. Off beaten path, delightful hiking country. Delicious food served on terrace overlooking our private lake. Tennis, volley-ball, badminton, boating, swimming and fishing. Complete informality. Adults.

SPECIAL JUNE RATES
RAIZEL COHEN DAVID SACKS

CAMP ANISQUAM
Gloucester, Mass.
ABRAM RESNICK
Director

This Adult Camp
in safe little sheltered cove
near picturesque Gloucester.
Salt water swimming, sailing,
boating and fishing on pre-
mises. Dancing, tennis, trips
and all sports. Six hours by
train from New York.

Write for Booklet, Rates
CAMP OPEN JUNE 17

MERRIEWOODE
A Camp for Adults Stoddard, N. H.
FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT: Beautiful Highland
Lake, 10 miles long, with good fishing and free
use of boats; interesting hiking thru woodland
trails; tennis, hand ball and badminton courts,
shuffleboard, archery, riflery, croquet, square
dancing.

From June 14 to 28 — Rate: \$45 weekly
OLIVE H. G. BARON, Director

AMERICAN MUSICAL POLITICS

ON THE same day that I heard one of the concerts of the Columbia University festival of American music, I heard a performance of the third string quartet of Shostakovich, written last summer. The contrast was apparent, not so much of two different kinds of music as of two cultures. The Shostakovich work was no world-shaking masterpiece, but except for a slightly formalistic first movement it was completely sincere and enjoyable. Form, content and idiom were one. Regardless of the scope of its message, which was not on the most epic level, it was at least a human voice speaking. Very few of the contemporary American works heard on the three Columbia programs even approached its level.

I am not saying this to claim that Soviet composers are all better than American, for it is not so. There are many fine composers in America, and there is music being written which can represent us with honor at any international competition. But the good music is simply not being performed at such festivals, and the reason is not sheer accident. Music is not so baffling a medium of communication as some critics make it out to be. People with an ear for it can pretty well distinguish work of quality from uninspired work. The fact, and it is one that can lead to the death of music in America, is that the conditions under which music is chosen for performance favor bad works rather than good.

Certain American composers have gotten out of the "starvation" class of artists. But they have paid a heavy price for this comfort, the price of not being artists. They are teachers, loaded with administrative details; or else they work for Hollywood, the radio or for anyone who will hire them. In contrast to the composers in the Soviet Union, who have the dignity and freedom of being able to work at their art, there is hardly an American composer who can make enough from his art to live on.

At the same time, performances of American music being relatively few in the concert world, such performances have to be fought for. Whether the music is lasting, moving or profound becomes less important to the composer than for him to get the necessary prestige of at least one publicized

performance, like the professor who regularly has to have a book or paper published. Performances being at a premium, they are won not through excellence but through wire-pulling, connections, influence with the largely tony set which runs the major musical organizations and such festivals as these. The atmosphere of the entire Columbia affair was not that of a report to the American people on what American composers were doing, but an exhibition to club members and patrons of a select group of works put together for the occasion, accompanied by expressions of mutual admiration. The general impression I got from the music as a whole was that of some good ideas and capable craftsmanship drowned in a sea of academicism; an academicism that, whether based on romantic practices or neo-classic ones, made the entire affair meaningless and unexciting; an academicism that is the necessary product of the atmosphere, away from living audiences, within which these part-time composers work.

Probably the best work of music presented was the Virgil Thomson opera, on which I have already reported [NM, June 3]. The first orchestral concert opened with a Concerto Grosso for strings, by Vittorio Giannini, which seemed to take over bodily a Vivaldi concerto and translate it into "modern" harmony. The word is in quotes because the old master, Vivaldi, had a much better idea of the functional nature of harmony. Leo Sowerby's "The Canticle of the Sun," a setting of a hymn by St. Francis for large chorus and orchestra, was an extremely well-made piece of music, but pointless.

Devotional writers of the past, when they wrote a hymn, wrote it to be used as a hymn. The form made sense. In Sowerby's work the words, chanted by a full chorus, might as well have been Sanskrit. The pounding orchestra spoke of excitements not found in the words, although it occasionally made some appealingly sensuous sounds. The melodic themes were of the clipped type which make for better formal manipulation than emotional communication. The work as a whole had the negative effect of a piece of abstract craftsmanship. Nicolai Bere-zowsky's cantata "Gilgamesh," for solo voices, chorus and orchestra, had

a different kind of pointlessness. The words were clear, amply underlined by the singers and illustrated at every step by the orchestra. The literary text, however, was an esthetic falsehood. Dealing with themes of death and immortality, it did not relate these themes to the special meaning they had in the myth and ritual of ancient times, nor did it offer anything of meaning to our own time except a vague feeling of temporary spiritual uplift. The music, while knowingly written, never descended deeper than the surface mood or picture; sometimes sweetly sensuous, sometimes resembling "Peter and the Wolf" without the humor or melody and twice as loud.

The second orchestral concert, in which Wallenstein conducted the NBC Orchestra, offered the "Tom Paine" overture by Burrill Phillips, "Variations on a Billings Theme" by Ross Lee Finney, and a symphony by Halsey Stevens, so much like each other it was hard to tell them apart. The idiom used was what seems to be most prevalent in American music today. This does not go the whole atonal, or polytonal, path. Instead it is generally tonal, but adds strange chords and modulations in an "anything goes" style, and the result is not freedom of expressiveness but a general characterlessness, like the English prose commonly found in a PhD. thesis. "New England Chronicle," by



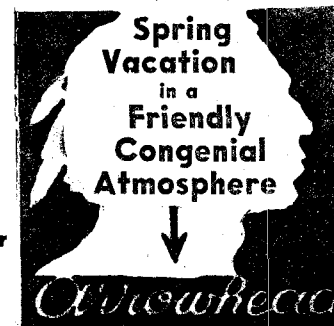
Richard Donovan, was at least partially rewarding, in its cleaner textures and impulsive movement.

The third concert was a bow to chamber music, in which many excellent American works have been written, but limited itself to the restricted medium of works for wind instruments. The music was generally pleasant, small-scale and innocuous. A sextet by Adolph Weiss showed a rich, expressive and original play with harmony and timbre, and a Serenade by Alexei Haieff had a good deal of melodic and rhythmic charm.

THE composer MacDowell once refused to permit a work of his to be performed at a concert of American music, because he resented the condescension implied in limiting American music to such special affairs. He showed deep insight. The very atmosphere of festivals such as these, making a bow to American composers once a year, and the accompanying politics that surround the winning of performances during the regular concert season, do harm rather than good to American music. This festival put American music in a false light. There is better music being written. Blitzstein's "Airborne," while far from greatness, puts most of the works played here to shame. A piano sonata by Roger Sessions, performed by Andor Foldes, which I heard at a League of Composers' concert, showed a fine originality, deep thought and tight structure from which much could be learned. Herbert Haufrecht for years has been writing songs, some of which I heard sung by the tenor John Seully, which have a compelling emotion and a flexible, consistent idiom, which makes them music worth knowing. These composers, and Ives, Ruggles, Cowell, Riegger, Bloch, Copland, all have music gathering dust which it would profit everyone to know. As a brilliant young musicologist remarked to me, discussing this festival, if our institutions of musical learning such as Columbia University and the Juillard School would offer year-round, frequent presentations of American music to an interested public, the fresh air let into American music would quickly blow out the backslapping politics, separate the concoctions from the honest works of imagination, bring out the stature to which American music has attained, and help it to attain even greater stature.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

Reasonable Rates
Indoor and Outdoor Sports



OPEN YEAR ROUND
ARROWHEAD, Ellenville, N. Y.; Tel. 502

FRIENDLY ACRES IN THE POCONOS

CHARMING • HOMELIKE • COMFORTABLE
Good Books - Recordings - Swimming - Golf
Horses Available

\$40 per week

Write to: DVO MARGENAU, R.D. 1,
East Stroudsburg, Pa. Phone: Bushkill 18 R 11

YOURS! A little more than EVERYTHING!

PRE-SEASON RATES THROUGH JUNE MAKE JULY 4th RESERVATIONS NOW!

WOODBOURNE, N.Y. Tel. WOODBOURNE 1150

CHESTERS ZUMBARO

A DELICIOUS IDEAL IN THE MOUNTAINS

ALL SPORTS (professionally equipped) . . . indoor recreation, good eating, merry company, entertainment, music, open-hearth fires, cheery quarters (regular or de luxe).

Camp PINELAND

Boys, Girls: 4-12 KINGSTON, N. Y.
Cultural and athletic activities; private lake; all sports; arts, crafts, music, dancing, dramatics, nature. Expert supervision. Finest food.

Rates: \$300 all inclusive

Directors: I. and S. STURMAN
1892 Prospect Ave., Bronx LU. 3-4730

KINDERLAND

HOPEWELL JUNCTION, NEW YORK

A Progressive Jewish Camp
for Boys and Girls—6-16



Cultural Activities. All Land and Water Sports, Arts & Crafts, Dancing, Singing. Well trained staff, Dr. & Nurses in attendance. Located on picturesque Sylvan Lake, 65 miles from New York City.

N. Y. Office: 1 Union Square W.—GR. 7-8659
Directors: B. Friedman, S. Korn.

"For a Capitol Vacation"

HOTEL CAPITOL

LIVINGSTON MANOR, N. Y.

Boating, Bathing, Fishing, Spring Water, Tennis & Handball Courts. All Sports. Modern Accommodations. Booklet.

July and Aug. rates: \$40 - \$50 per week
July 4 Weekend: \$24 for 3 Full Days

NEW MASSES

Classified Advertisements

50¢ a line. Payable in advance. Min. charge \$1.50. Approx. 7 words to a line.
Deadline, Fri., 4 p.m.

RoKo GALLERY

RoKo FRAMES

PAINTINGS — PRINTS — SCULPTURE

Expert framing at reasonable prices
51 Greenwich Ave. (east of 7th Ave. & 11 St.)

STENOTYPE REPORTING

Stenotype reporter, vet—conventions, meetings, legal and labor proceedings. Notary Harry Birnbaum, Tel. OL 2-5827.

INSURANCE

LEON BENOFF, serving a satisfied clientele since 1919, with every kind of insurance, including LIFE INSURANCE, 391 East 149th St., N. Y. Call Me. 5-0984.

INSURANCE

CARL BRODSKY—Automobile, fire, life, liability, burglary, plate glass, surety bonds, compensation etc. Any kind of insurance, 729 Broadway, New York City. Tel. GRamercy 5-3826.

EYE CARE

EUGENE STEIN, Optometrist—Eye examinations—Glasses Fitted—Visual Training. Room 507, 13 Astor Place (140 East 8th St.), NY 3 GRamercy 7-0930.

PIANOS RECONDITIONED

Why buy a new piano at today's inflated prices? Let us recondition your old one. Original tone and touch restored. Ralph J. Appleton: 157 East 56th St., Brooklyn 3, N. Y. Dickens 6-5777. PLaza 3-0566.

TYPEWRITER CO.

Typewriters, mimeos, adders, office machines repaired. Buy, sell, exchange. Monthly service 100% union. Vets. A & B Typewriter—639 Melrose—JE 8-1604.

VERMONT VACATION

ETHAN ALLEN FARM offers simple living in beautiful countryside to a few guests. Inter-racial. \$35 per week. Lower rates during June. Write: Miss Reland Gray, R.F.D. 2, Chester, Vt.

HEALTH REST

Take a sensible Health-Building Vacation at HEALTH REST vegetarian resort. Weekly, week-end; moderate rates. Phone Nanuet 2316. Nanuet, N. Y.

CITY SLICKER FARM

CITY SLICKER FARM, Jeffersonville, Sullivan Co., N. Y. Swimming, barn dances. And food! Mmm! \$35 wk. Booklet. Phone Calli-con 65 F 22.

50 miles from New York Mamasco LAKE LODGE

An ideal place to spend the first days of Spring • Recordings. Fine Library. Open Fireplaces. Congenial Atmosphere. Famous Cuisine. Write or phone, Ridgefield 820.

RIDGEFIELD, CONN.

MEN RELAX — KEEP FIT! Special Yearly Gym Course \$135.00

Special For Boys
Boxing Scientifically Taught
WOMEN—Mon-Wed-Fri 10 a.m.-9 p.m.
Special Short Courses

GOODWIN'S GYM
1457 Broadway (42nd St.) WI. 7-8250

THEATER

MUSIC and the theater are old companions. The musical comedy continues to be our most popular single form of theater. The rather banal *Up in Central Park*, which just completed a record-breaking tour, is an example of the public affection for the slight tale told in song and dance.

Even in realistic drama, as demonstrated this season in the passage with music in *Another Part of the Forest* and in the impromptu choruses of *Our Lan'*, music serves, with remarkable effect, to heighten or relax dramatic tension. And in the films a dimension seems to be lost when the music stops.

Yet, ironically, where music is used directly in drama, problems arise. In opera what is considered good singing requires performers whose vocal organs are so over-developed as to deprive them of the flexibility and physical coordination necessary to good acting. The rendition of a musical passage in full voice virtually immobilizes the singer.

How much can opera express dramatically? Too little, I thought, for hopes of an opera in our realistic age—until I saw Menotti's *The Medium*, now competing as theater with current Broadway productions. *The Medium* is an American parallel, in a way, of the successful operatic productions by the Nemirov-Danchenko Musical Theater in Moscow, where acting was stressed and the singing was done in the natural voice rather than in the forced volumes and registers of the usual operatic singing.

How much is lost, musically, when the acting rather than the singing is stressed; and whether the voice training for operatic effects is the development of an abnormality and an esthetic offense as some people claim, are debates I will not join in here. For me the important matter is that a greater concern for dramatic values in opera leads, as it logically should, to better music drama.

In that other great form of the musical theater, the ballet, an overdevelopment similar to the overdevelopment of the operatic voice stands as much in the way. Here the strenuous body silences the voice. The body speaks to music in its motions but its range of expression has always been restricted; and more so today than before, with the transformation of ballet from an aristocratic to a popular art.

In the present phase of this transformation in America two major trends are noticeable, particularly in the work of the young and lively Ballet Theater, whose Spring season at the City Center was one of the events of the year. One is the tendency to replace the costumed romping European peasants of the classical ballet with American types, giving them settings and themes drawn from American life. Examples of this are the Jerome Robbins ballets, particularly the sailor's night in *Fancy Free* and the jazz turns in *Interplay*.

The other is the trend toward realistic drama instead of the customary ballet fairy tale, particularly in the Anthony Tudor ballets. Tudor's work has sometimes been compared with Martha Graham's; but her challenging use of the chant and her more sensitive symbolism bring her compositions closer to the dance poem than to the dance play.

The Tudor ballets attempt to dramatize the Freudian concept in the dance. Talented as they are, they are rather literal in their symbolism, and their psychiatric preoccupations give them a strain of abnormality. *Under-tow*, with its spiralling patterns of sex guilts and atonements, coming after that dramatization of inhibition, *Pillar of Fire* (which remains Tudor's masterpiece) indicates a declining rather than a growing mastery of this material.

Perhaps this preoccupation with depth psychology is due to the fact that, in the transformation of ballet from an aristocratic art, it has found itself at a way station as an art for the intelligentsia. And the intelligentsia, for more than the surface reasons, continues in its consuming interest in psychology.

This development is, of course, not peculiar to ballet. Similar developments are observable in other arts. And in one aspect they all seem to be a significantly shrinking response to the repression that, for some ten years, has been contracting our culture. Through the incessant direct and indirect persecution of the progressive, the mind of our time is being shut off from the whole world and forced increasingly inward upon itself. The one free area in America, the one intellectual area unburdened with risks, seems to be the subconscious.

The more one thinks of it, the more indignant one feels recalling the vigorous impulses in the dance of the Twen-